

# Positive Focusing is Directly Useful

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LIX, Ecole Polytechnique & Inria Saclay

Proofs and Algorithms Seminar  
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# Background

Sharing is important.

But there is no sharing in the  $\lambda$ -calculus.

The simplest way to introduce sharing in the  $\lambda$ -calculus is *subterm* sharing.

$$t, u ::= x \mid tu \mid \lambda x.t$$

In a call-by-value setting, general applications  $tu$  become somewhat redundant.

→ It is possible to restrict the shape of applications.

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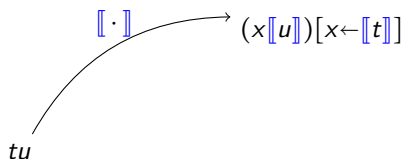
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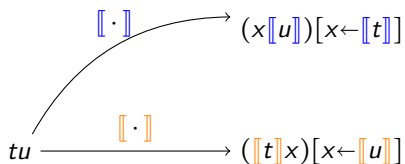


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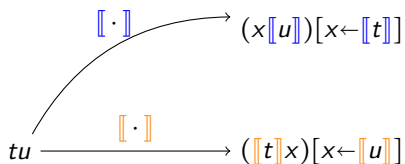


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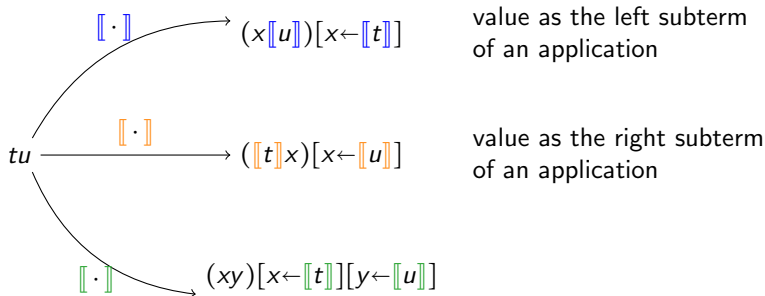
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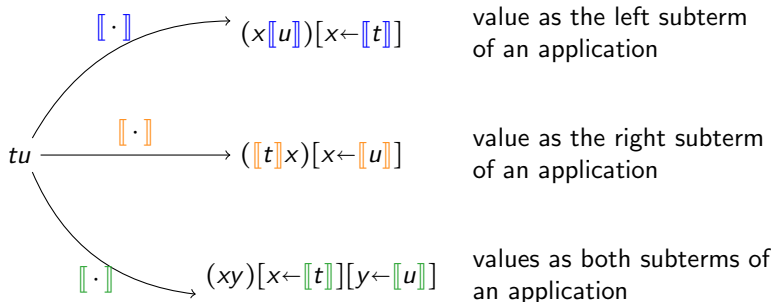
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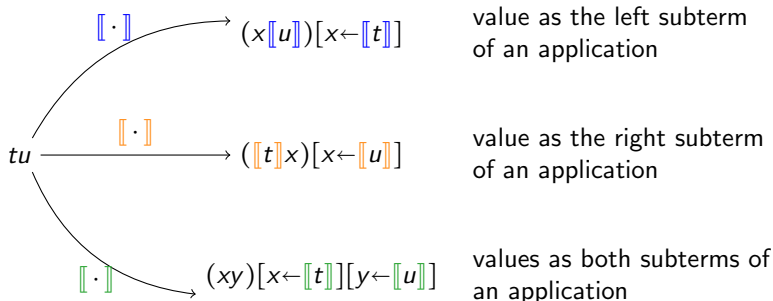
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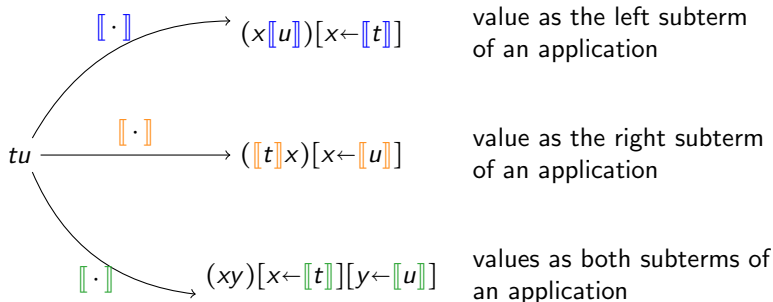
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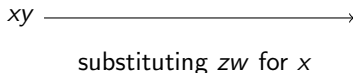
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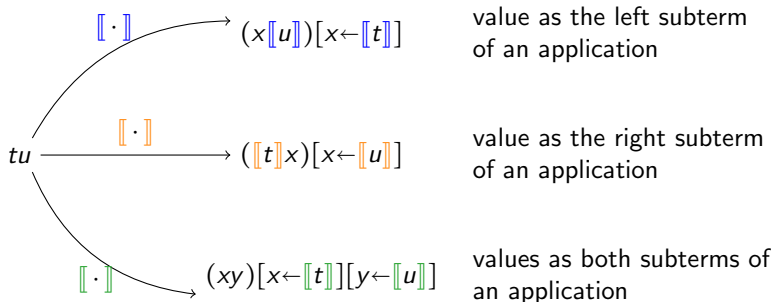
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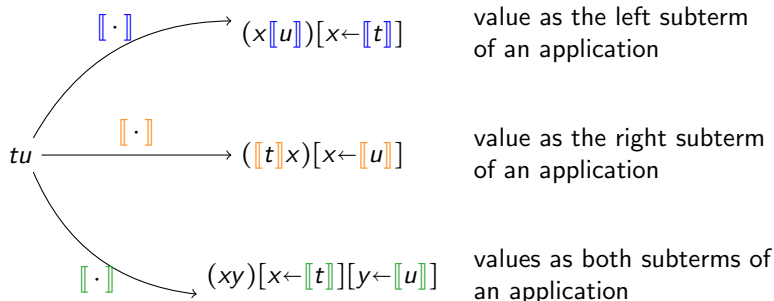
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# Classifications of call-by-value calculi with ESs

It is possible to go further by restricting the immediate sub-terms of applications to be **variables** instead of values.

This gives us nine different forms of applications:

the general form  $tu$  and eight **crumbled** forms  $vu$ ,  $xu$ ,  $tv'$ ,  $vv'$ ,  $xv'$ ,  $ty$ ,  $vy$ , and  $xy$ .

Some more ways to classify call-by-value calculi with ESs.

- Nested or flattened ESs:  $t[x \leftarrow u[y \leftarrow r]]$  vs.  $t[x \leftarrow u][y \leftarrow r]$

- Small-step vs. micro-step substitutions:

$$(xx)[x \leftarrow I] \rightarrow II$$

vs.

$$(xx)[x \leftarrow I] \rightarrow (Ix)[x \leftarrow I] \rightarrow (II)[x \leftarrow I] \rightarrow II$$

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# Useful substitutions v.s. non-useful substitutions

In micro-step settings, one often has the following substitution rule:

$$C\langle x \rangle[x \leftarrow v] \rightarrow C\langle v \rangle[x \leftarrow v]$$

What about making a substitution only when it **contributes to the creation** of some  $\beta$ -redexes?

Consider

$$(yx)[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t] \rightarrow (y(\lambda z.t))[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t]$$

There is no  $\beta$ -redex created after this substitution, and there won't be any  $\beta$ -redex created in the future.

→ non-useful

Some more examples:

- $(xy)[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t] \rightarrow ((\lambda z.t)y)[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t]$  is **useful**
- $x[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t] \rightarrow (\lambda z.t)[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t]$  is **non-useful**
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# Usefulness: subtleties

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$x[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t] \rightarrow (\lambda z.t)[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t]$  is non-useful  
while  $x[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t]y \rightarrow (\lambda z.t)[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t]y$  is useful

- Indirect usefulness:

$(xy)[x \leftarrow z][z \leftarrow I] \rightarrow (xy)[x \leftarrow I][z \leftarrow I]$   
 $\leftrightarrow$  It is useful!

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$$\begin{aligned} & (x_0 t)[x_0 \leftarrow x_1][x_1 \leftarrow x_2] \cdots [x_{k-1} \leftarrow x_k][x_k \leftarrow I] \\ \rightarrow & (x_0 t)[x_0 \leftarrow x_1][x_1 \leftarrow x_2] \cdots [x_{k-1} \leftarrow I][x_k \leftarrow I] \\ \rightarrow^* & (x_0 t)[x_0 \leftarrow I][x_1 \leftarrow I] \cdots [x_{k-1} \leftarrow I][x_k \leftarrow I] \end{aligned}$$



# Usefulness: subtleties

- Contextual closure:

$x[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t] \rightarrow (\lambda z.t)[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t]$  is non-useful  
while  $x[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t]y \rightarrow \underline{(\lambda z.t)[x \leftarrow \lambda z.t]}y$  is useful

- Indirect usefulness:

$(xy)[x \leftarrow z][z \leftarrow I] \rightarrow (xy)[x \leftarrow I][z \leftarrow I] \rightarrow (Iy)[x \leftarrow I][z \leftarrow I]$   
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Positive **Focusing** is Directly Useful

# Focusing

Focusing is a technique first introduced by Andreoli to **reduce non-determinism** in *logic programming* (or *proof search*) in linear logic.

It comes from a simple observation:

Rule	invertible	non-invertible
Phase	negative	positive
Connective	negative	positive

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# Negative/positive $\lambda$ -terms

In a previous work with Dale Miller, we use the focused proof system  $LJF_{\exists}$  to design term structures.

Formulas are **polarized**:

- Implications are **negative**
- Atomic formulas are either **negative** or **positive**

We consider the two uniform polarizations  $\delta^-$  and  $\delta^+$ :

- $\delta^-$  yields the usual tree-like syntax. No sharing within a term.  
 $\leftrightarrow$  *negative/usual  $\lambda$ -terms*
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# Positive $\lambda$ -calculus $\lambda_{\text{pos}}$

$$t, u ::= x \mid t[x \leftarrow yz] \mid t[x \leftarrow \lambda y.u]$$

- ESs are flattened. Every term is of the form  $E(x)$ .
- Restricted form of explicit substitutions:
  1. Minimalistic application  $yz$
  2. No ES for variables: variables are not values and renaming chains do not exist!

Example of reduction:

$$\begin{aligned} & x[x \leftarrow yy][y \leftarrow zz'][z \leftarrow \lambda w.w'[w' \leftarrow ww]] \\ \rightarrow_{\text{OEL}} & x[x \leftarrow yy][y \leftarrow (\lambda w.w'[w' \leftarrow ww])z'][z \leftarrow \lambda w.w'[w' \leftarrow ww]] \\ & x[x \leftarrow w'_1 w'_1][w'_1 \leftarrow z' z'][z \leftarrow \lambda w.w'[w' \leftarrow ww]] \end{aligned}$$

Key fact:  $\lambda_{\text{pos}}$  (or  $\lambda_{x\text{pos}}$ ) is directly useful by definition!

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$$\begin{aligned} t, u &::= v \mid tu \mid t[x \leftarrow u] \\ v &::= x \mid \lambda x. t \end{aligned}$$

- General applications  $tu$
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There are two rules in  $\lambda_{\text{VSC}}$ :

- multiplicative rule ( $m$ -rule) for firing a  $\beta$ -redex and creates an ES

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Known result: the number of  $m$ -steps is a **reasonable cost model**.

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Positive Focusing is Directly Useful

# Dissecting $\lambda_{\text{VSC}}$

$\lambda_{\text{xpos}}$  is directly useful while  $\lambda_{\text{VSC}}$  is not.

In order to relate  $\lambda_{\text{VSC}}$  to  $\lambda_{\text{xpos}}$ , we define a core calculus of  $\lambda_{\text{VSC}}$  which is essentially equivalent to  $\lambda_{\text{VSC}}$  and captures **direct usefulness**.

Step 1: Separate  $e$ -rules for variables ( $\rightarrow_{e_{\text{var}}}$ ) and abstractions ( $\rightarrow_{e_{\text{abs}}}$ ).

Step 2: Distinguish (directly) useful  $e$ -steps ( $\rightarrow_{e_u}$ ) from non useful  $e$ -steps ( $\rightarrow_{e_{\text{nu}}}$ ) for abstractions.

Core reduction =  $\rightarrow_m + \rightarrow_{e_{\text{var}}} + \rightarrow_{e_u}$

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# Big picture

$$\lambda_{\text{ovsc}}$$

# Big picture

 $\lambda_{\text{ovsc}}$  $t \longrightarrow^* u$

# Big picture

$$\lambda_{\text{ovsc}}$$

*t*

*t'*

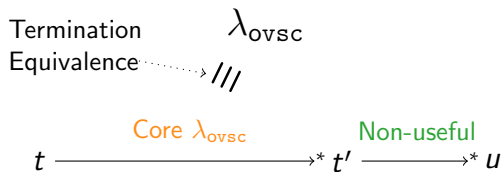
*u*



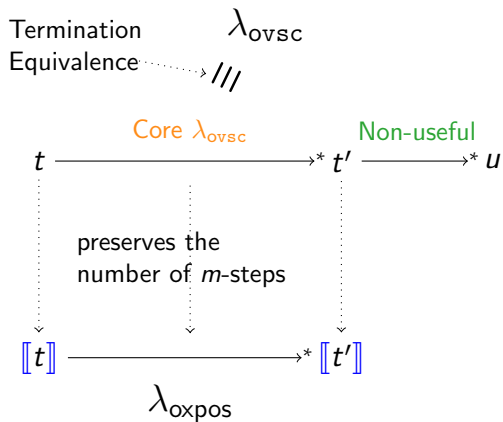
# Big picture

 $\lambda_{\text{ovsc}}$ 

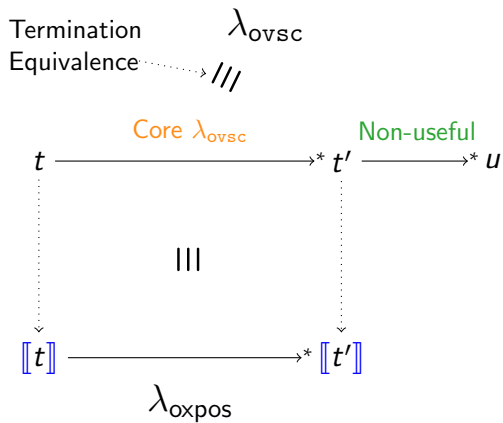
# Big picture



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# Conclusion and Future work

- We show that the **compactness** of  $\lambda_{\text{pos}}$  allows one to capture the **essence of usefulness**. What is remarkable is that  $\lambda_{\text{pos}}$  is an outcome of a study of term representation inspired by focusing.
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Thank you for your attention!